[MUSIC PLAYING]

RALPH SEXTON: I'm Ralph Sexton. I just had my 69th birthday, married a wonderful lady, Valerie. And I have two terrific kids.

VALERIE: I went to bed one evening and 2 o'clock in the morning, woke up in excruciating pain, vomiting. And so we decided to go to the local emergency room, where they diagnosed pancreatitis.

RALPH SEXTON: The biggest difficulty with pancreatitis is the uncertainty associated with how is it going to go? How is the disease going to go? Is your body going to be able to resolve this for you? How much help is needed?

VALERIE: They tried to assure me that it normally would resolve itself in a couple of days, so that, you know, I was assuming he was coming home. And we were going to get on our airplane to go see our kids play lacrosse. But that didn't happen for quite some time. Ralph developed a cyst that necrotized and was starting to destroy the pancreas. And that's when the local hospital decided that he needed additional care that they weren't able to provide. And he was transferred to Beth Israel hospital and Dr. Tyler Berzin.

RALPH SEXTON: The first meeting with Dr. Berzin was terrific. He's as even tempered, and direct, and comfortable as you can get, a peach of a guy, and didn't pull any punches. He began with that conversation about this is going to take a long while. You got to be patient with this. Your body could do the work. But it takes a long while for the body to do the work.

VALERIE: Dr. Berzin, in particular, wanted to explain in detail how every procedure was going to be. He was always coming in with film and showing me these lovely CAT scans of Ralph's pancreas. But it did help explain the level of damage that was done to Ralph's pancreas and what they needed to do to fix that and to get Ralph back to a normal schedule.

RALPH SEXTON: Maybe six weeks into it, when I had that temperature event, that's when he put in those four plastic sets. But he knew that it was limited, because they're smaller. And he wanted something that he could work in. And so that's when we came to understand that there was a AXIOS Stent out there, going to become available.

VALERIE: Dr. Berzin told us that the AXIOS Stent would give him better access to the pancreas, so that he could clean any debris. And it would drain much more efficiently than any stent that he had used previously. Once the AXIOS Stent went in, Dr. Berzin was pleased with the amount that the pseudo cyst had shrunk, and that he thought the AXIOS Stent would finish the job, and that Ralph would be back to normal.

RALPH SEXTON: The biggest benefit was Dr. Berzin saying, this is going to make things better.

VALERIE: We're able to travel together now. And Ralph is able to get back to doing some work. He's done a lot of maintenance around the house and in the yard.

RALPH SEXTON: You gain new perspective as you get a little bit further away from it. You forget some of the ugly details. And you see some of the wonderful work that Valerie did, all the responsibility that she assumed in the process, the great care that Dr. Berzin and his team gave us. And their communication with us was terrific. But I feel much, much better. And I can do just about anything that I want to.

[MUSIC PLAYING]